

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03

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INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: BGEN IV

SUB: BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL ROUND TABLE IN IVORY COAST,
NOVEMBER 1976

BEGIN SUMMARY

MINISTER OF PLAN DIAWARA AND MINISTER OF FINANCE BEDIE HAVE
AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO THE HOLDING OF A BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL
ROUND TABLE IN ABIDJAN SOMETIME IN NOV 1976; THE APPROVAL
OF PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY IS BEING SOUGHT AND THE PROPOSED
DATE IS THE SECOND OR THIRD WEEK IN NOV. AMBASSADOR AND
EMBASSY ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL STAFF ARE ASSISTING BI IN MAKING
CONTACTS AND PLANNING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE ROUND TABLE. END
SUMMARY.

1. DR. ANGLEO FORTE, VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL,
SPEND THREE DAYS IN ABIDJAN THIS WEEK TO GET APPROVAL IN
PRINCIPLE TO HOLD A ROUND TABLE OF BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL HERE
IN ABIDJAN NEXT NOV. THE ORIGINAL SUGGESTION THAT SUCH
A ROUND TABLE MIGHT TAKE PLACE HERE WAS PUT FORTH BY BUSINESS
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT ORVILLE FREEMAN IN AUGUST 1974

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WHEN HE ATTENDED SOCIETY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE IN

ABIDJAN. FAVORABLE INITIAL REACTION FROM CERTAIN MINISTERS AT THAT TIME LED FREEMAN TO PURSUE MATTER FURTHER. WHEN IT BECAME EVIDENT TO BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL THAT LAGOS WOULD NOT BE AN APPROPRIATE SITE DURING 1976, FREEMAN SENT DR. FORTE TO ABIDJAN TO EXPLORE PROSPECTS. DR. FORTE GOES FROM HERE TO NAIROBI AND IT IS PROPOSED THAT THERE BE ANOTHER ROUND TABLE THE WEEK BEFORE OR THE WEEK AFTER THE ABIDJAN ROUND TABLE SO THAT THE PARTICIPANTS COMING TO AFRICA WOULD ATTEND BOTH SESSIONS.

2. WE BELIEVE BI IS WELL KNOWN TO THE DEPARTMENT, AS WELL AS TO COMMERCE, SINCE ITS MEMBERSHIP CONSISTS OF OVER ONE HUNDRED MAJOR MULTI-NATIONAL CORPORATIONS, MOSTLY AMERICAN.

3. AMBASSADOR TOOK DR. FORTE TO SEE MINISTERS DIAWARA (PLAN) AND BEDIE (FINANCE). BOTH WERE ENTHUSIASTIC AND IT WAS AGREED THAT DIAWARA WOULD TAKE THE PRINCIPAL ROLE FOR GOIC. HE IS APPROACHING PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY FOR APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE, FOLLOWING WHICH ORVILLE FREEMAN IS TO WRITE TO DIAWARA WITH MORE SPECIFICS AND DIAWARA WILL REPLY TO COMPLETE THE DEAL.

4. THERE WAS STILL SOME UNCERTAINTY ABOUT DATES WHEN FORTE LEFT ABIDJAN BECAUSE IN DISCUSSION BETWEEN FORTE AND DIAWARA THE WEEK OF NOV 22, NOV 29 AND DEC 6 WERE MENTIONED AS ALTERNATIVE. FORTE SUBSEQUENTLY DISCOVERED THAT BI HAS ANOTHER SEMINAR AT THE END OF NOV IN MADRID AND ASKED AMBASSADOR TO GO BACK TO DIAWARA TO SUGGEST EITHER WEEK OF NOV 8 OR NOV 15. ORIGINAL BI PROPOSAL THAT ROUND TABLE TAKE PLACE IN OCTOBER WAS REJECTED BY DIAWARA ON GROUNDS THAT BOTH HE AND BEDIE WILL STILL BE ON WAY BACK FROM MANILA IBRD/IMF MEETING AT THAT TIME. AFTER FORTE'S DEPARTURE, AMBASSADOR SPOKE TO DIAWARA AGAIN, WHO ACCEPTED WEEK OF NOV 8, SUBJECT TO HOUPHOUET'S APPROVAL.

5. EMBASSY DISCUSSED WITH FORTE RESPECTIVE ROLES OF BI AND EMBASSY IN HELPING PREPARE THE ROUND TABLE. IT WAS UNDERSTOOD THAT BI WOULD SEND OFFICIAL BACK HERE IN JUNE TO GO OVER ARRANGEMENTS AND AGREEMENTS WITH GOIC AND WOULD SET UP OFFICE HERE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THREE WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF ROUND TABLE. EMBASSY'S ROLE SHOULD BE LIMITED TO ADVICE, RECOMMENDATIONS ON IVORIAN PARTICIPANTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR SOCIAL INVITATIONS. UNDOUBTEDLY WE SHALL BE CALLED ON FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICES IN THE COURSE OF PREPARING THE ROUND TABLE.

6. IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO KNOW OF EXPERIENCE OTHER POSTS HAVE HAD WITH BI ROUND TABLES IN RECENT YEARS

TO JUDGE HOW MUCH HELP WE SHOULD NEED TO GIVE THEM.

7. EMBASSY WILL ADVISE FURTHER AS SOON AS PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET
BOIGNY GIVES HIS APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE.

8. FOR AF/W: PLEASE ADVISE ORVILLE L. FREEMAN, PRESIDENT
BUSINESS INTERNATIONAL, 1 DAG HAMMARSKJOLD PALZA NY
NY 10017 TELEPHONE: 212-759-7700 OF SUBSTANCE OF THIS
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